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The President communicated a paper on the life and character of Major Pitcairn, from an Associate Member, the Hon. Charles Hudson, saying:—

473 My valued friend and former colleague in Congress, Hon. Charles Hudson, one of our Resident Members, but whose health has not allowed him to attend our meetings of late, has sent me a paper to present in his name. Residing at Lexington, and having published an elaborate history of that town, his attention has recently been turned to the conduct and character of Major John Pitcairn, who was one of the leaders of the British march to Concord, on the 19th of April, 1775, and who has the credit, if credit it be, of having given the order to fire first on the Provincials on that morning. Mr. Hudson has been impressed by the general good disposition and character of Pitcairn, who was afterward mortally wounded at the battle of Bunker Hill, and he has given a sketch of his conduct and career in a manuscript of many pages, written carefully by his own hand, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

I propose to read a portion of it only, and then to refer it, with the concurrence of the Society, to the Committee on the publication of our Proceedings. I am sure it will be read with interest when it shall appear in print. Meantime, the Society will not fail to authorize me to assure our venerable Associate — one of the ablest and honestest men whom Massachusetts has ever had in her service — of the gratification we all have had in hearing from him on a subject on which he is so peculiarly at home.

Mr. Hudson's communication, "The Character of Major John Pitcairn, the British officer, who opened the Drama of the American Revolution, on the 19th of April, 1775," here follows:—

Nothing is more natural than for men who feel themselves oppressed to curse the rod by which they are smitten. The multitude,



especially at the time when they feel the oppression, do not stop to inquire who originated the system. They see the agent who executes the painful order, and they are disposed to hold him responsible. In this way they virtually allow themselves to be imposed upon, and so ascribe to the agent what really belongs to the principal. A striking instance of this occurred during our Revolution. The people thought, nay, they knew, that they were oppressed. They knew that the premier of the realm of England was generally appointed from the fact that he approved of the policy of the administration, and was depended upon to aid and carry forward the designs of the crown. They inferred that Lord North, the king's adviser, was in fact the author of the oppressive and arbitrary acts by which they were suffering.

Their views were expressed in the following stanza of a ballad:—

“Lord North was as chill as the bleak Arctic Ocean,  
 A natural-born tyrant was he;  
 His dark breast ne'er glowed with a generous emotion,—  
 He hated the brave and the free.”

But a knowledge of all the facts in the case has led to the conviction that North was among the most liberal of the ministry, was opposed to the general policy of the administration, and in fact, at one time, tendered his resignation to his Majesty for that very reason. But the king refused to accept it. North, who had received special favors from the king, felt that he could not in honor forsake him in the midst of his trouble with his colonies, and concluded that by remaining he might be able to check some severities, and so aid the cause of enlightened statesmanship.

This example should teach us caution, and induce us to withhold our condemnation of Major Pitcairn, whose character we propose to present, until we have made ourselves acquainted with all the facts in the case. That he was a brave and active officer, all will admit; and that, being a subordinate officer, he acted in obedience to others. We are fully sensible of the injustice and cruelty practised upon us; but the question is, who was the author of this injustice and oppression?

The state of things when Pitcairn came in contact with us was peculiar, and should be duly considered before we decide where the censure ought to rest. There were at that time practically two co-existent governments. The one, represented by General Gage, was a mere despotism, resting on certain arbitrary, unconstitutional acts of the British Parliament. The government thus attempted to be forced upon the colony virtually annulled our charter, and deprived us of all the rights, privileges, and immunities of Englishmen, which had been granted by that charter, and confirmed by the constitution of England. This new despotic government deprived us of the right of trial by jury in our own vicinage, and rendered us liable to be sent to Great Britain for trial; took from us the long-established privilege of holding public meetings; robbed us of the right of electing our counsellors, sheriffs, and representatives; of granting the salaries of our judges and



other officers; and, in fact, of passing any laws to promote our local prosperity and happiness. These arbitrary measures Gage was sent to execute, and a large military force was assigned to that service. Gage had already commenced the exercise of these extraordinary powers. He had seized the share of powder belonging to Charlestown, and had by proclamation forbidden the meeting of the Provincial Congress, and all assemblies for deliberation, under severe penalties.

But there was at the same time another government in the colony of Massachusetts, — a *government of the people*. This government claimed the right to exercise all the powers granted by their charter, and such as they had exercised from the first, under the eye and with the approval of the British authority. They asked for no new powers, assumed no additional prerogative, and made no changes in their form of government, except such as Gage himself had forced upon them. He had dissolved the legislature, and had refused to order a new election, though urgently asked to do it, and had practically withdrawn from the exercise of all executive care under our charter. To supply these defects, so as to keep alive a government, the people had substituted the Provincial Congress for the legislature, and given to the Committee of Safety such executive and military powers as they deemed necessary to give life and vigor to their organization.

The immediate policy and objects of these conflicting governments were well defined and known to the people. Gage's government was to enforce the recent acts of Parliament; and the government of the people was to oppose and resist that enforcement. The difference in the two cases was this, — Gage's officers were to enforce their orders at the point of the bayonet, if necessary; while the officers of the Provincial Congress were expressly commanded not to commence open military hostilities by firing, unless they were first fired upon. This was the exact state of the case on the 18th of April, 1775. It was obvious that this state of things must soon lead to an open rupture. The impatience of Gage to show his devotion to the ministry would prompt him to take some measure to enforce their arbitrary acts; and the fixed determination of the provincials to obstruct the execution of these acts must have been foreseen. The scene which occurred at Lexington was but the natural result of the policy of Gage. And a better field could not have been chosen to test the firmness of the Americans. The military spirit of Hancock, the broad and enlightened statesmanship of Adams, and the religious patriotism of Clarke, had prepared the people for the event which awaited them. What occurred there is well known, and need not be repeated here.

Our object is to show who the guilty party was, or, to be more specific, whether Major Pitcairn was censurable for the part he acted on that occasion. It should be borne in mind that he was a subordinate officer, and of course acted under the direction of others. It is also well known that he was always open and frank in avowing the part he took at that time; and neither Smith nor Gage charged him with exceeding his instructions. Nor does the fact that he was the sole commander at the time the order to fire was given alter the

case in the least. He knew the object of the expedition, and, moreover, that they were to destroy the military stores at Concord, and to remove any and every obstacle which might obstruct their march, impede their movement, or prevent their success. As the sole object of the expedition was to disarm the Americans, and so render them unable to resist the mandates of Gage, he knew that destroying or seizing small-arms at Lexington was securing that object as effectually as the destruction of cannon at Concord. The whole responsibility of the attack at Lexington rests upon Pitcairn. Some have attempted to remove the obliquity from Pitcairn to Smith by declaring that the Colonel was upon the common when the firing commenced. We do not see that this alters the principle for which we contend, that the officer who gave the order to fire acted under instructions. If it were Smith, he acted under the order of Gage; and if it were Pitcairn, he acted under the order of Smith.

Besides, there is no reliable evidence that Smith was on the common when the firing commenced. He halted some six or eight miles below Lexington, and sent back for a reinforcement, and at the same time detailed Pitcairn with the light troops to move on to Concord with all due despatch, and take possession of the bridges. Pitcairn was not the man to loiter, and when he was met by the Lexington messenger a mile or so below the town, he is represented as marching rapidly upon the village. In this distance of seven or eight miles, he must have gained considerably upon the troops under Smith, and as the command to fire was given immediately as the troops rushed upon the common, we cannot believe that Smith was there when the firing commenced. We know of but two depositions which seem to sustain the position that Smith gave the order to fire; and these were given by two aged gentlemen fifty years after the event, and really amount to little more than this, — that they saw an officer on horseback, whom they took to be Smith, ride forward and give the order. But Pitcairn in his manliness never attempted to throw off the responsibility upon any one. He admitted that he gave the order, and always attempted to justify himself by saying that he simply returned the fire of the Americans. And Smith, in his report to Gage, after stating that he sent forth Pitcairn with the light companies, says: "On these companies' arrival at Lexington, *I understand from the report of Major Pitcairn, who was with them*, and from many officers, that they found on a green close to the road a body of the country people drawn up in military order, with arms and accoutrements, and as appeared after, loaded, &c." Here the Colonel tells us plainly that he was not present to witness the occurrences; but that he had his information from Major Pitcairn, who was present. If this statement needed any further confirmation, we have it in the report officially made by General Gage. He says: "About three o'clock the next morning [April 19, 1775], the troops [of Pitcairn] being advanced within two miles of Lexington, intelligence was received that about five hundred men in arms were assembled and determined to oppose the king's troops; and on Major Pitcairn's galloping up to the head of the advanced companies,

two officers informed him that a man, advanced from those that were assembled, had presented his musket, and attempted to shoot them, but the piece flashed in the pan; on this the Major gave direction to the troops to move forward, &c." And after describing the dispersion of the Americans, and the firing of the king's troops, he says in a new paragraph, "After this Colonel Smith marched up, with the remainder of the detachment, and the whole body proceeded to Concord."

The evidence therefore is conclusive that the troops at their arrival at the common, and at the fatal discharge upon the minute-men, were under the control and direction of Pitcairn, and that Smith with the remainder of the detachment did not arrive at the field until after the fatal volley was fired. But it seems unnecessary to labor this point, as Pitcairn with his usual frankness always assumed the responsibility of giving the order to fire, and justified his course by the plea that the Americans commenced the contest by firing upon the king's troops, and that he only returned the shot. Though the evidence on which reliance is placed is very far from sustaining the position that the firing was commenced by the Americans, we are unwilling to pass it by without comment. Pitcairn makes it a full ground of defence in giving the order to fire. We are ready to admit, and shall endeavor to show more fully, that the order to fire upon the minute-men drawn up in martial array needs no justification from him; but we must insist that the evidence on which he rests his case is far-fetched and inconclusive. He does not pretend that he saw or heard the discharge of any gun, but virtually admits that he had no knowledge of any such fact; that he relied entirely upon the statement of others. And to what does this hearsay statement amount? Simply this — that as he rode forward to the head of his column, two officers informed him that they saw an individual snap his gun at them, and that the gun only flashed in the pan. They did not pretend to know whether the gun was loaded or not; or, if loaded, whether it contained a ball, or whether it was a mere blank cartridge. Other facts must be taken into the account. This firing was in the early dawn when the flash in the pan could be seen at a considerable distance, so that they could not tell whether the musket was aimed at them or not.

It must also be remembered that Captain Parker, having no certain knowledge that the British were approaching (the messengers he had sent to ascertain whether the British were really coming, having been captured and detained), had dismissed his company about two o'clock that morning, with order to assemble at the ringing of the bell and the firing of alarm-guns. The last messenger, more fortunate than his predecessors, escaped from the toils of the cautious foe, and returned post-haste to the common and informed Captain Parker that he discovered the king's troops about a mile below, moving rapidly upon the village. The bell was immediately rung, and the alarm-guns fired. It is probable that the whole period from the time the messenger announced the tidings of the rapid approach of the king's troops, to the actual arrival of these troops at the common, was not more than twenty or twenty-five minutes; and in the hurry and con-

fusion of the moment, some of these calls upon the minute-men to repair to their post would naturally if not necessarily be continued till the British advance were in sight of the common.

It was undoubtedly the flash of one of these alarm-guns which the British officers mistook for a shot aimed at them. This misapprehension on the part of these officers, and of Pitcairn himself, is the more easily accounted for, from the fact that they had but a short time before been informed that a large force had assembled at Lexington to oppose their passage. Pitcairn had also another reason which would incline him to the opinion that an attack would be made upon his men at Lexington. He had but a short time before captured Benjamin Wellington, one of Parker's minute-men, who was coming from the south-easterly part of the town to join the company on the common. Wellington was found to be duly armed, which looked like military resistance. Pitcairn took his gun from him, and extorted the promise that he would return peaceably to his own home. All these things occurring at the moment, and the responsibility resting upon him, would in a great measure deprive Pitcairn at the time of that cool deliberation which he would naturally exercise under other circumstances. Pitcairn must have been an ardent, impulsive, and enthusiastic man, to have drawn the conclusion he did from such facts as were stated to him. The very efforts which he always made to justify the order which he gave, shows that his zeal was greater than his knowledge; otherwise he would have relied upon the soldier's sure justification, — *orders from a superior*. We are the more surprised from the fact that Pitcairn was bred to the profession of arms, and we should naturally have expected that, like Corporal Trim, he would have made *orders* his sole guide.

We condemn the conduct of the British at Lexington. Their policy was unworthy any civilized nation; but Pitcairn was not the author of that policy. We are now dealing with him, and not with the nation whose servant he was. The act was wrong, but was he answerable? He obeyed orders, and what else could he do? To disobey would subject him to a court-martial and condign punishment. To resign in the face of the enemy, or in the hour of danger, has always been regarded a military offence. If we approve of war in any case, we must support an army; and to do this, we must conform in some degree to the maxims which have been found necessary to keep an army together. It has been found imperative to prohibit deliberation in the army. The great and good Lafayette, popular as he was, was condemned and imprisoned by the French government for what they decided to be *deliberation in the army*. Knowing the general policy or desire of his government, the soldier, in the absence of orders, must act on those general principles which would govern a sentinel on his post, or a skirmisher on duty. He cannot expect to have a superior always by his side. An officer thus situated may have and generally has discretion so far as mode and manner, time and place, are concerned; but the grand object of the expedition as well as his express orders must be obeyed. The general sentiment of the people, the



design of the expedition, the *atmospheric* order, if we may be allowed the expression, is and should be regarded as controlling as a verbal or written order. This general sentiment, this prevailing wish or demand, not only governed the British, but the Americans at that time. Colonel Barrett at Concord, Captain Wilson of Bedford, and Captain Baldwin of Woburn, and others acted on this principle, and acted wisely. Neither they nor others had any superior at hand to order the attack; but the whole community had passed upon the question, and *resistance* was the *watchword*. Such was the determination of the Americans, and the British were equally determined in their policy. War, morally considered, existed before the scene at Lexington occurred. The two governments were morally in hostile array against each other. The government represented by Gage were in fact the rebels. They had ignored the great principles, the solid foundation of English liberty; and while they were trampling their own organic law under foot, they were determined to crush out liberty in America, and deprive the colonists of the sacred rights which the king and Parliament had guaranteed to them. The Colonial Government planted themselves, or rather remained on their charter, which was an embodiment of English liberty. The hirelings of Gage had already drawn the sword, while the minutemen of the colony stood firm with their hands upon the hilt of their swords, which they were determined to draw to ward off a blow from hostile steel, and to use freely in case a blow was struck or a thrust aimed at them.

In this state of things, and with these feelings, an open rupture must soon occur, and we should be willing to grant the same indulgence to the British subordinate officers that we claim for our own. We have seen that the provincials were as bent upon resistance as the British were, except that they were resolved not to commence the war. But after the British had broken the peace by attacking and slaughtering our citizens at Lexington, military officers and our citizens generally felt themselves free to attack the king's troops whenever they had an opportunity. The prohibition *not to fire first* was practically removed, so that they were as free to assail the British forces after the slaughter on the morning of the 19th, as the British officers were to attack our soldiers before.

If this position be sound, Pitcairn was no more censurable for the acts of that morning than our captains and subalterns were in attacking the British in the afternoon; — both were carrying out the policy of their respective governments, and were obeying orders express or implied. And if severe censure were due subordinate British officers, we see no reason why Pitcairn should be censured for his conduct at Lexington Common, any more than Captain Laurie for his conduct at the North Bridge at Concord. Neither had a superior at hand to order the firing upon the Americans. But they both knew their duty, and both obeyed the known object for which they were detailed; and as soldiers they are not exposed to censure.

A whole century has now passed, and our cause has been success-



ful, and we can afford to be liberal. The person who has been the object of much reproach lived but a short time after the act which gave him at the time a bad reputation. In nothing is true heroism more conspicuous than in kind treatment of a fallen foe; and after the lapse of a century, we should be not only willing, but proud to do justice to all those who, through misguided zeal, were once arrayed against us. Even if a *crime* were committed, time should wipe out the guilty stain. But in the case of the much-accused Major, we know nothing that we can truly call criminal. A story has been told that before leaving Concord, Pitcairn, with his hands reeking with blood, stirred his brandy with his fingers, uttering some vile imprecation upon the Americans. This story we think rests on very slender evidence. And besides, at that time no killed or wounded American had fallen into his hands; and we cannot believe that he or any brave soldier would sport with the blood of his own men. His epithets applied to our citizens on the common may have led thousands to regard Pitcairn as a rough, unprincipled man. We readily admit that profanity is not only ungentlemanly, but vulgar; but the foolish habit seems to have been the fashion of the camp; and we wish it were confined to that department of public service.

We confess that we are not able to detect any thing in the discipline or conduct of Pitcairn unworthy of a gentleman or an honorable commander. The character of an officer is generally reflected in the conduct of the men in his command. If the officer is prompt, brave, or moral, these qualities will be seen in the conduct of the men under his control. Judging of Pitcairn by this rule our impression of him must be favorable. Even the less efficient Smith restrained the natural passions of an ignorant soldiery. The fire in Concord village which induced the provincials on the hill to attempt to pass the North Bridge was the burning of a few gun-carriages, and this fire which caught upon the court-house was undoubtedly an accident, and was easily extinguished. And the facts compel us to say that we have discovered no general traces of barbarity until the troops became subject to Percy's command, when a general system of vandalism prevailed. We do not censure him for any warlike attacks upon our troops, or for firing upon any dwelling within which our soldiers had taken refuge, and from which they assailed the king's troops. So far he would be justified by the laws of war. But if he practised acts of barbarity, or knowingly allowed them, he is justly censurable. A system of barbarity did prevail after Percy took the command of the forces. The soldiers entered the houses of the citizens on the plain in Lexington, demanding refreshments which were promptly granted to the utmost of the ability of the household; and when the soldiers had consumed all the house afforded, they commenced a system of pillage, taking and carrying away whatever they deemed valuable, destroying furniture, and in several cases setting fire to the houses they had plundered. Even at the Munroe tavern, the head-quarters of Lord Percy, they not only marred and injured the building, but they shot down in cold blood John Raymond, an aged servant in the family,

who had committed no offence, and who had furnished them with all the refreshments the house contained.

And after leaving Lexington, the troops murdered two aged unarmed men whom they found peaceably in their dwelling. And the brutal soldiery not only invaded private dwellings in Arlington, but they forced their way into the chamber of childbirth, where the feeble subject was in bed, and one of the brutal soldiers presented his bayonet to her breast. On pleading for her life she was finally told that she might leave the house with her infant, as they were determined to set the house on fire. And though she had not been able to walk across the room, the awful danger which awaited her so roused the reserved powers of her feeble condition, that she succeeded in crawling to an out-building on the premises with her infant, leaving five children in the house, which was set on fire, but the fire was happily extinguished, so that these children were saved. They also took from this house the communion service of the church. Such atrocities deserve the severest condemnation, and should blast for ever the character of any officer who should encourage or knowingly allow them.

But discrimination should be used. Though these barbarities occurred while Percy was the commander of the king's troops, he is justly entitled to all the palliating circumstances which the case will allow. We should grant him all the indulgence so far as principle is concerned, that we have extended to Pitcairn. But the great change in the conduct of the king's troops which occurred immediately on the change of commanders certainly needs explanation.

It is most probable that the soldiers who entered the houses on Lexington Plain, and committed atrocities there, were Smith's fugitives, as they had been longest suffering from hunger and fatigue. But, at the same time, it should be remembered that on the arrival of these fugitives, Percy formed his men in a hollow square to receive them on their approach, — thus taking them into his immediate care and keeping; and any thing like the burning of a dwelling-house on the plain, in the immediate connection with his square, could not have escaped Percy's observation; especially as one of the principal fires — that of a house with its barn and out-buildings — was not more than eight or ten rods from the field-piece on which he relied to keep the Provincials at bay, and which was frequently discharged while the troops remained on the plain. And as for the barbarities committed at the Munroe tavern, Percy's own head-quarters, he can hardly escape the responsibility of allowing them. And allowing such vandalism in Lexington would naturally, in the estimation of an ignorant soldiery, be construed into a permission to commit such outrages elsewhere.

There was an occurrence at Concord which may have excited the British to acts of barbarity. At the return fire of the Americans at the North Bridge in Concord, two of Captain Laurie's men fell, and were left some time upon the field, — one killed, the other mortally wounded. A rude, ignorant young man, who happened to be passing by, seeing the wounded man attempt to rise, approached him, and with a hatchet, which he happened to have in

his hand, struck him several blows on his head, and thus ended his suffering. This unfortunate event, ordered by no one, and condemned by all, was seized upon by the British officers, and gave rise to the story told by Gage, that the Americans scalped, cut off the ears, and otherwise mutilated the English prisoners who fell into their hands. Such a belief would naturally exasperate the officers of the crown, and prompt them to deeds of barbarity.

Percy is justly entitled to all the palliation which these combined circumstances and considerations can afford; but, after all, we feel constrained to say that they do not fully save him from the censure of being remiss in duty, and of allowing barbarities which a brave and honorable commander should have checked. We will not charge him with wanton cruelty; but we fear that he relied too much upon his lineage, and looked forward with more earnestness to his prospective civil position, and the pleasures of the chase, than he did to the observance of the rules of modern warfare. As compared with Pitcairn, we think that the gallant Major has left us a much brighter record than his lordship.

Pitcairn was undoubtedly a brave and active officer. In the expedition to Concord on the 19th of April, he appears to have been almost the sole actor. He was detailed to move rapidly with the light troops, and take possession of the bridges beyond Concord. He opened and closed the affairs at Lexington that morning; and when they arrived at Concord, the troops assigned to him were ordered, Captain Parsons to Colonel Barrett's, to destroy the stores, and Captain Laurie to guard the North Bridge, so as to insure Parsons's safe return. And on the retreat from Concord no one appears more conspicuous than the Major. Oppressed by the provincials, when the British troops entered Lexington on their retreat, they were but little more than a rabble rout. Smith and Pitcairn resolved to make one more effort to check their flight, and to restore something like order. They posted a small detail to hold the pursuers at bay, while they rushed to a woody defile some half a mile ahead, where they attempted to make a stand. In the mean time a party of the provincials had passed through the woods unobserved, and secreted themselves behind a lot of split rails near the road, almost opposite the place where the British were attempting to make their stand. Before their line was half formed their rear was driven in upon them, which created great confusion; and the men, seeing Pitcairn ride across the road to restore order, rose from behind the rails, and poured in a well-directed, enfilading fire, by which Pitcairn was wounded, and fell from his horse. The animal, startled at the unexpected fire, and finding himself unrestrained by curb or rein, bounded from the road with all his trappings, and gave himself up, as it were, a prisoner of war.\* Smith was severely wounded at the same time.

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\* The horse with his accoutrements was sold at auction, and the pistols were presented to the veteran General Putnam, who wore them during his service in the Revolution. They have remained always in the family

Though it may be difficult to form a just estimate of a man of Pitcairn's eccentric nature, we will give our impressions of the man,—stating his merits and defects of character as they appear to us. We believe him to have been a brave, active, and conscientious soldier, devoted to the government in whose service he was employed; and that the course he pursued on the 19th of April was fully justified by the laws of war. The belief he always entertained that the Americans fired first is not necessary to be urged in defence of his conduct on that occasion; and though he was probably sincere in that belief, it must have arisen from his natural credulity, and the excitement under which he was laboring, when he first formed that impression; as the evidence on which he rested his belief when viewed by itself, cannot sustain his position for a moment; and when it is confronted by the sworn testimony of twenty-five or thirty of the principal citizens of Lexington taken at the time, every man of sound and sober judgment must allow that Pitcairn was at the time carried away by his feelings, and that the impression that haunted him for the remainder of his days was a species of delusion.

As a man, the whole current of traditionary and other evidence sustains the position that he was high-minded and honorable. In forming our estimate of his character, we should discriminate between him and his superior officers. Some of them were selected from the known fact that they were hostile to America, and were sent here by the crown to execute the recent acts of Parliament. This was true of Gage, and several other general officers. Their presence was evidence of their hostility; but it was not so with Pitcairn. We have no evidence that he justified the king's policy toward the colonies. He certainly did not enter the service for the purpose of prosecuting the war against the colonists, and of compelling them to submit to the oppressive acts of Parliament, which virtually would convert them from free men into slaves. He was in the service of Great Britain early, and was commissioned captain in 1765, ten years before the commencement of the American Revolution; and was made major in 1771. He with his regiment was ordered to this country in 1774. We cannot therefore class him with those who owed their position to their known hostility to the cause of freedom. From the character of

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till 1879, when Mrs. Elizabeth Putnam, relict of the late John P. Putnam of Cambridge, New York, and granddaughter-in-law of the patriotic general, generously and patriotically presented them to the town of Lexington. This act on the part of the generous donor is the more meritorious from the fact that she had had several liberal offers in coin for these interesting relics. But regarding them too sacred to be bought by money, and considering the place where they were first used to enforce oppression, and where they were captured, and dedicated to freedom's cause the same day, the most appropriate resting-place for them, and to show her profound regard for the memory of the first martyrs in the cause of liberty, she generously, without fee or reward, bestowed them upon Lexington. They were received with grateful emotion, and are carefully kept in the Lexington Library Hall, with other precious relics. They are in a good state of preservation; and we trust that they are emblematic of the permanency of our institutions, and of lasting gratitude to the worthy benefactress. — C. H.



the man, the presumption would naturally be that he was opposed to the war rather than otherwise. At any rate we have no reason, from what we know of the man, or from his acts here, to presume his personal hostility to us or our cause.

The whole current of evidence, traditionary and otherwise, represents him as a gentleman in his manners, genial and courteous at all times, liberal in his feelings, and ready to perform an act of kindness whenever an opportunity presented itself. He is also represented as warm-hearted, impulsive, and credulous, true and trusty as a friend, and never guilty of a mean action. He was a favorite in his regiment, — esteemed by his men while living, and mourned when dead. Nor was this attachment confined to the British troops. He was more popular among the citizens of Boston than any other of their officers, and it was said that in case a difficulty arose between the citizens and the British troops, Pitcairn was the only man among them from whom they could obtain justice.

This much we are compelled to say in vindication of what we believe to have been the much-injured name of Major Pitcairn.

His active self-devotion of which we have spoken continued to the last. At the attack on the American works on Bunker Hill, he was twice repulsed, and wounded at the head of his column; but on the third effort, at the head of the brave men he led, he was among the first to climb the breastwork, and fell in the redoubt which controlled the fortunes of the day. He was carried to a house near the ferry, where he soon expired. He was buried under Christ Church in Boston. Some years after, his friends in England sent for his remains; and it has always been reported that another gentleman whose form and size much resembled Pitcairn's was buried under the same church, and his remains by mistake were sent instead of Pitcairn's, so it is doubtful to this day whether the monument in Westminster Abbey erected in honor of John Pitcairn covers his remains or not.

























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